

STATE HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY OF IOWA  
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

# The Annals of Iowa

---

Volume 73 | Number 3 (Summer 2014)

pps. 295-296

---

## A Railroad Atlas of the United States in 1946, volume 5, Iowa & Minnesota

H. Roger Grant  
*Clemson University*

ISSN 0003-4827

Copyright © 2014 State Historical Society of Iowa. This article is posted here for personal use, not for redistribution.

---

### Recommended Citation

Grant, H. R. "A Railroad Atlas of the United States in 1946, volume 5, Iowa & Minnesota." *The Annals of Iowa* 73 (2014), 295-296.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0003-4827.12135>

Hosted by [Iowa Research Online](http://iowa-research-online.org)

*The Quiet Season: Remembering Country Winters*, by Jerry Apps. Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2013. v, 147 pp. \$22.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Barbara J. Dilly is associate professor of anthropology at Creighton University and an Iowa resident. Her current research focuses on popular culture images of young women in American agriculture. She also applies her research and personal experience as an active participant in the transformation of American agriculture toward more sustainable practices in the Midwest.

The winter of 2013–14 is one Iowans will remember as a hard one, but not like the ones Jerry Apps remembers back in the 1940s in Wisconsin. We now get through winter by turning up the thermostat and going about in insulated waterproof garments and warm vehicles. Apps and his family cut more wood and suffered soggy wool. Car heaters existed but were not yet perfected.

Apps's remembering of the material and social life of winter is a good read. It is short and not too deep—good for conversations about the good old days and how we got through them. But it isn't shallow. It has a message. Those of us who live in the upper Midwest need to make peace with winter to survive it, and that entails rites of passage into a particular kind of personhood with particular values and relationships. It makes us patient and resilient. It requires us to rely on and care for each other. It calls us to respect the power of an unforgiving nature—and appreciate its beauty. If you read this memoir carefully, the story is not just about winters of the past; it is about letting winter shape us, not trying to make winter conform to our needs for comfort. Before Iowans face another winter, they should read this book and think about the value of the experience. Don't leave. Some of us have to stay here and tell the stories that make us who we are.

*A Railroad Atlas of the United States in 1946*, volume 5, *Iowa & Minnesota*, by Richard C. Carpenter. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013. xx, 211 pp. Maps, notes, appendix, indexes. \$70.00 hardcover.

Reviewer H. Roger Grant is the Kathryn and Calhoun Lemon Professor of History at Clemson University. He is the author of numerous books and articles on railroads; the most recent is *The Louisville, Cincinnati & Charleston Rail Road: Dreams of Linking North and South* (Indiana University Press, 2014).

Railroad maps have long been popular. In the 1920s industry magnate O. P. Van Sweringen allegedly told a Cleveland, Ohio, reporter that his two favorite authors were "Rand and McNally." In the not-so-distant past a number of history-oriented railroad map albums have appeared. Kalmbach Publishing Company, producer of *Trains* and *Classic Trains* magazines, found strong sales for its reprint of the 1928

*Handy Railroad Atlas of the United States*, which features a state-by-state set of maps initially published by Rand McNally. More recently, Mike Walker has produced a series of map publications of railroads in North America, including *Comprehensive Railroad Atlas of North America: Prairies East and Ozarks*, which covers Iowa and shows steam and electric inter-urban railroads past and present. The newest contribution to railroad maps that includes the Hawkeye State is Richard Carpenter's volume under review here.

As its title indicates, this volume reveals the once extensive network of rail lines that as of 1946 blanketed Iowa and Minnesota. It does so in considerable detail, indicating both operating and abandoned lines. Take the insert map for Boone, Iowa, for example. The half-page, color-coded drawing shows how the Chicago & North Western; Fort Dodge, Des Moines & Southern (electric); and Milwaukee Road served this county-seat town. The map also indicates a piece of the North Western that had been abandoned about 1930. Included, too, are locations of various support facilities, such as an interlocking plant. The full-page drawing of Des Moines graphically reveals the complexities of railroads that served the capital in the immediate post-World War II period. In addition to town and city maps, the volume proceeds largely county-by-county across the state. Additional features included are notes on maps, references, and indexes of coaling stations, interlocking plants and former interlocking plants, passenger and non-passenger stations, tunnels, and viaducts.

Any undertaking of this magnitude inevitably produces errors. Examples abound (Morton rather than Morton Mills, Thompson River rather than Grand River, and Southern Illinois Railway rather than Southern Iowa Railway). Then there are historical misstatements. Take the Iowa & Southwestern Railroad in Page County, for example. It was not abandoned in 1916, but rather a year later, and then in 1918 its rails and other salvageable materials were removed. It is surprising (even shocking) that the extensive works of Don L. Hofsommer, dean of railroad historians of the Midwest, are virtually ignored in the reference list.

If this volume is used in conjunction with Mike Walker's *Comprehensive Railroad Atlas of North America: Prairie East and Ozarks*, anyone who seeks to learn the location of an active or abandoned rail line in Iowa should readily find the information.